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CROYDON, riding high in the Isthmian League's Second Division, face the most important game in their 23 years' history tomorrow (Saturday).

They take on Wycombe Wanderers at Croydon Arena knowing that a win will put them into the first round proper of the FA Cup for the first time and the possible chance of meeting a League club.

But they also have to face the very real possibility of having to rise to the occasion with the visiting supporters outnumbering their own small band of followers.

Wycombe, one of the best supported away clubs in the Isthmian League, are expected to bring more than 400 — more than double Croydon's average support.

But ever hopeful, the Croydon club are giving the soccer-minded residents in the neighbourhood one more opportunity.

Says chairman Mr Jack Milsted: "It gives us a chance to see whether Croydon will support us. If we have ever had a chance against such opposition as Wycombe then it must be this year when we have a fine record. I know we could be outnumbered, so I ask the fans to rally round."

The looming shadow of Crystal Palace, just a mile away, rules out the possibility of Croydon getting good support regularly, but for once the fixture programme has gone in their favour.

Palace are at Halifax, so many of Croydon soccer folk will be looking for a game to go to.

Of course, should Croydon win and get a home game against — say, Southend, Gillingham or Aldershot — the club will suddenly overnight win 3,000 or 4,000 "fans", all claiming their long-standing support and asking for stand seats!